

Undergraduate Admissions Statement

1. Admissions Process

This Statement should be read in conjunction with University's Admissions Principles and Procedures (<http://www.bris.ac.uk/university/governance/policies/admissions-policy.html>).

Year of admissions cycle – 2012

Courses covered

D100 - Veterinary Science

Admissions Team

Admissions Tutor: Dr Lynda Moore

The Admissions Panel for Bristol Veterinary School is Chaired by the Admissions Tutor and reports directly to the BVSc Programme Committee within the Faculty of Medical and Veterinary Sciences. The Admissions Panel comprises at least twelve members of academic staff, who are actively involved in teaching and who are drawn from the various Schools that contribute to the BVSc programme.

Outline of assessment methods

All applications to UK veterinary schools have to be submitted to UCAS by October 15th. All applications are considered on an equal basis. Applications are not segregated by the type of educational institution attended. Applications are initially screened on the basis of educational achievements and predictions and a *pro-forma* completed for each student. A second screening ranks the student in terms of the following:

- A realistic interest in veterinary science
- Knowledge of the scope of careers in veterinary science
- Work experience in veterinary practice, on farms and in other settings
- Interests outside veterinary science
- School/college/community activities
- Evidence of initiative and non-academic achievements

This information is obtained from the Personal Statement and the Reference.

Finally, the Admissions Tutor makes a judgment as to whether the application has been:

1. Unsuccessful
2. Successful - possibly interview
3. Successful - definitely interview

Some students may be interviewed soon after selection, but others will be held for possible interview, dependent upon numbers of applicants. All students are informed of the Admissions Panel's decision in writing. The aim is to respond to all candidates within 4 weeks of receipt of application, in order to establish contact and inform the candidate of the process to be followed.

Departmental Visit Days and other correspondence with applicants

Additional assessment: (a) interviews

Interviews are held from November through to March. All applicants are interviewed by two individuals (at least one of whom will have been trained in fair and effective recruitment techniques) using 20-minute interview slots. A third member of staff may be present in the room to observe the process. Interviews are undertaken in accordance with the University's policy on equal opportunities. All candidates and visitors are given a talk by the Admissions Tutor and a guided tour of the Langford site (the veterinary field station of the School of Clinical Veterinary Science). Each team of interviewers is asked to place the applicants within one of three categories:

1. Exceptional
2. Acceptable
3. Unacceptable

The acceptable group is further broken down by order of merit (1 to 8). After each day of interviewing, offers are usually made within 48 hours to all exceptional candidates. Applicants ranked as either 1 or 2 in the acceptable group will be informed that they are being held; all other candidates will be informed that they have been unsuccessful at this stage. The on-hold applicants will be monitored by the Admissions Tutor throughout the session (November – March) with further offers being made if places are available in February or March.

Additional assessment: (b) tests/written work

Bristol Veterinary School does NOT require students to take the BMAT examination for entry in 2012. However, the BMAT examination is being considered for entry in 2013.

Procedures for specific categories of applicant

Mature students are treated in a manner similar to the above.

International students are treated in a manner similar to the above, taking into account the exam structure of the country they reside in, but they may be offered a telephone interview.

Applications for deferred entry are welcome.

Re-sit candidates and re-applications are considered using the same criteria.

Cross-dept/joint course admissions arrangements

2. Criteria for assessing applicants

Entry Requirements

Academic entry requirements for standard qualifications (A-level, SQA, IB, Access, BTEC, Welsh Bacc, 14-19 Diploma, GCSEs) can be found in the online Undergraduate Prospectus:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2012/sections/VESC/157/admissions#entry>.

Other qualifications, including international qualifications, will be considered on their individual merits; further information is available at:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/international/study-at-bristol/how-to-apply/country-specific/>

For UK/EU graduate applicants, the entry requirement is an Honours degree of class 2:1 or a 1_s; the subject area of the degree would normally be science based, but this is not compulsory. In the case of non-science graduates, Chemistry and Biology A levels (or equivalent) would be required.

Academic Record Criteria

For students offering subjects at A2, AS levels are NOT taken into consideration.

The subjects required at A2 include Chemistry and Biology and a third academic subject. No priority is given to students studying Mathematics or Physics as the third subject over any other. If in doubt about the academic standing of their third subject, the candidate should contact the Veterinary School directly

vet-ug-admissions@bristol.ac.uk

Only 3 subjects are required at A2; additional A levels or other qualifications (e.g. Advanced Extension exams) are not taken into consideration.

Contextual information

We take an holistic approach to all applications, ensuring that the educational and social context in which an applicant applies is taken into consideration, where supported by clear evidence that this may have adversely affected academic achievement. This may include time spent in Local Authority care, information about which is provided in the UCAS application.

We also consider evidence of clear motivation to study. This may include attendance at a University summer school, a targeted Access Scheme (such as Access to Bristol), or participation in outreach activities. Consideration will also be given to applicants who have completed a targeted Access scheme at another university, under the 'Mutual Recognition Scheme'.

We do not take the following into consideration when making admissions decisions: the school type attended by an applicant or whether an applicant's parent has any experience of higher education.

Personal Statement Criteria

Important criteria in the Personal Statement and, particularly, the interview include:

- A proven interest in veterinary science and commitment to the subject and career
- Evidence of work experience both with veterinary surgeons as well as with animals
- Evidence of clear thinking and understanding, problem solving, scientific knowledge and

analytical skills

- Evidence of effective team working, interpersonal and communication skills
- Evidence of commitment to others
- Non-academic achievements and extra-curricular interests
- Positions of responsibility; voluntary or paid work
- Evidence of relevant reading or research beyond the school/college syllabus
- Evidence of motivation and commitment; a self-propelled learner!

Reference Criteria

The preference is for an academic reference rather than a personal one (where possible); it should support the student's personal statement but avoid repetition. The applicant's academic performance and abilities should be discussed along with any extenuating circumstances known to have affected progress. The ability of the applicant to interact with peers and teaching staff, along with positions of responsibility held within the school, is valuable information.

Criteria for international applicants (if different)

Similar to the criteria described above.

English Language requirements can be found

at:

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/university/governance/policies/admissions-english-lang-reqs.html>

Applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, religion, disability or age.

3. Offers

Typical offers for A-levels and other UK qualifications can be found in the Entry Data in the online UG Prospectus

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2012/sections/VESC/157/admissions#entry>.

Offers to applicants with non-standard qualifications will be made equivalent to the published A level offer.

Variations in offer level

We may make lower offers based on whether an applicant is deemed to have experienced educational disadvantage, as defined in section 7.5 of the University's Admissions Principles and Procedures.

These may be one or two grades lower than the standard offer published in the Undergraduate Prospectus but will not drop below a grade B in any subject.

4. Other

The University of Bristol does not offer an accelerated, 4-year BVSc degree for graduates but it does consider requests for accreditation of certified prior learning. Graduate applicants are provided with details of the units taught in our first two years and asked to consider these topics in the light of their previous studies. Requests for exemptions from a unit or units must be supported by evidence including details of subjects previously studied, the depth of that study and the marks achieved. BVSc unit organisers and the Programme Director then use their academic judgment based on this information, allowing exemption only where the student will suffer no educational disadvantage as a result during the BVSc programme. Tuition fees are reduced pro-rata in line with exemptions granted.

In determining who to admit and who to graduate we have to follow the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeon's (RCVS) professional, prescribed standards as well as our own academic standards and regulations. We do not have the discretion to offer individuals dispensation from parts of the course as graduation leads to automatic membership of the RCVS and the legal right to practise veterinary surgery in the UK. We are, therefore, in this respect the gatekeeper for the veterinary profession. As a result, we require applicants to declare their disabilities when they apply. When considering disabled applicants we consider carefully the requirements of the "Day One" competencies set by the RCVS and will consider whether the applicant has sufficient coping strategies, not only to cope

with the course, but also with the “Day One” competencies at the end of the course. Applicants should be able to carry out all the tasks normally undertaken by veterinary surgeons. If this is in doubt, then such a case will be addressed on an individual basis and additional expert advice may be sought to inform our decision.

It is NOT normally possible to transfer from another course onto the BVSc Veterinary Science programme. Applicants wishing to join the BVSc programme must apply through UCAS and follow the same process as school leavers. Exception may be made in cases of mitigating circumstances for students wishing to transfer from another UK veterinary school. Students are able to transfer out of the BVSc programme onto other science degrees at the discretion of the individual Schools/universities involved.

Entry into year 2 of the BVSc programme would only be considered in very rare circumstances, e.g. for graduates with relevant experience or for a transfer from another veterinary school. Such cases are dealt with on an individual basis.

Professor Jo Price
September 2011.